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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

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SUBJECT

Organization of the Hydrometeorological Service in the Vicinity of Astrakhan

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2. A branch of the Hydrographic Department (Gidrograficheskiy Otdel) of the Caspian Flotilla (Kaspiyskaya Voennaya Flotiliya) manages the affairs of the Hydrometeorological Service in the city of Astrakhan. This branch was headed by Kuchin (fnu), Captain, 1st rank, Navy. The Caspian Roadsteads Oil Tanker Steamship Agency (Raydtanker) received weather reports every other day from this service.
3. These weather reports were printed on standard forms and contained the following information:
- (a) A map of the northern part of the Caspian Sea.
  - (b) Temperature of the air:
    - (1) At Astrakhan
    - (2) At sea along the off-shore areas.
    - (3) At Fourteen Foot Roadsteads
  - (c) Temperature of the water
    - (1) In the Volga River
    - (2) In the Caspian Sea
  - (d) Water level of the Volga River and the Caspian Sea.
  - (e) Speed of the river current.
  - (f) Ice conditions. The appearance of sludge and solid ice and the movement of ice in autumn and spring.

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- (g) Thickness of the ice on the Volga in centimeters.
- (h) Wind force in balls and the direction of the wind. If the wind force is more than five balls, storm warnings are sent out to activities in the region.
- (i) The swell of the sea in balls.

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4. [redacted] all work of Kuchin's branch of the Hydrographic Department is based on the principle of collecting and processing weather conditions from Stalingrad, Baku and Makhashkaia. Throughout the entire Volga area, from the city of Astrakhan to the village (selo) of Ol'ya there are no special instruments for hydrometeorological observations.
5. Besides giving forecasts for short periods, two to three days in advance, forecasts are given also for long periods of time, ten to twenty days in advance.
6. Two to three copies of the forecasts of Kuchin's branch are delivered to Reydtanker by courier. One copy of the forecasts goes to the Routes and Situation Department (Otdel Puti i Obstanovki) and the remainder for the services controlling the equipment and ships of the steamship agency.
7. Storm warnings are sent out by telephone as telephone messages (telefonogram). All the documentation of a hydrometeorological nature in the steamship agency was unclassified. Nearly all of these communications were sent by ordinary mail (otkrytaya pochta).
8. Besides this procedure of receiving weather information the steamship agency itself was engaged in making hydrographic observations on the Volga-Caspian and Ural-Caspian Channels. These observations were part of the functions and responsibilities of the Routes and Situation Department of Reydtanker. This work was carried out directly by workers of the sounding-surveying parties and the observers manning the water-gauging posts. These observations consist of:
  - (a) Determining the water level in the river and sea portions of each channel.
  - (b) Determining the condition of the soil and silt in the channel.
  - (c) Observing the condition of existing shoals and the appearance of new ones.
  - (d) Observing the speed of the water current under various conditions.
  - (e) Observing the ice situation.
  - (f) Observing the wind direction and force.

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The transport ships of Reydtanker do not conduct special observations for the hydrometeorological service nor are they equipped with any instruments for making such observations.

9. Hydrometeorological observations are also conducted by Reydtanker at the following places:
  - (a) Fourteen Foot Roadsteads aboard the floating dock (debarkader) Donbass, a distance of 113 nautical miles from Astrakhan.
  - (b) Aboard the lightship (Plovuchiy mayak) VolgoKaspiyskiy which is located near the entrance to the river distance of the Volga-Caspian channel, about 100 nautical miles from Astrakhan.
  - (c) Aboard the floating dock (debarkader) Mary which is located at the roadsteads of Gur'ev, about twelve miles from Peshnoy Island.

The observations performed at these points are chiefly of local importance and are intended for the steamship agency Reydtanker and ships of other organizations visiting these areas.

10. General weather forecasts for Astrakhan and vicinity are published daily in the local newspaper "Volga" except Mondays when the paper is not published. Forecasts are also given by the local radio station which broadcasts from 1800 to 1900 daily, except on Sundays when broadcasts are made from 1100 to 1200, Moscow time. The weather reports are normally given fifteen minutes after the hour during these periods of broadcast and last for five minutes. This radio station operates on a wavelength of 335 meters and is located at the square 1/n Karl Marks.

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